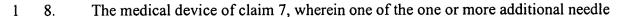
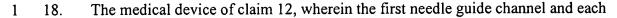
I CLAIM:

2	1.	A medical device comprising:
3		a body;
4		a lumen extending from a first lumen opening formed in the body to a second
5		lumen opening formed in the body, the lumen adapted to receive a length
6		of suture; and
7		a first needle guide channel extending from a first needle guide channel opening
8		formed in the body to a second needle guide channel opening formed in
9		the body;
10		wherein the lumen and the first needle guide channel are configured in operative
11		relation with each other such that a needle that is backloaded into the first
12		needle guide channel will be advanced out of the first needle guide
13		channel by pulling on a length of suture that is connected to the needle and
14		threaded through the lumen.
15	2.	The medical device of claim 1, wherein the first needle guide channel is arcuate
16	shaped	d.
17	3.	The medical device of claim 1, further comprising a handle coupled to the body.
18	4.	The medical device of claim 3, wherein the handle is coupled to the body by a
19	conne	ctor piece.
20	5.	The medical device of claim 4, wherein the connector piece is bendable such that
21	it can	be fixed in a variety of positions.
22	6.	The medical device of claim 1, wherein a portion of the body is tapered.
23	7.	The medical device of claim 1, further comprising:
24		one or more additional needle guide channels, each extending from its own first
25		needle guide channel opening formed in the body to its own second needle
26		guide channel opening formed in the body;
27		wherein each of the one or more additional needle guide channels is configured in
28		operative relation with the lumen such that a needle that is backloaded into
29		any of the one or more additional needle guide channels will be advanced
30		out of the additional needle guide channel by pulling on a length of suture
31		that is connected to the needle and threaded through the lumen.



- 2 guide channels are arcuate shaped.
- 3 9. The medical device of claim 7, wherein each of the one or more additional needle
- 4 guide channels and the first needle guide channel is arcuate shaped.
- 5 10. The medical device of claim 7, wherein the first needle guide channel and each of
- 6 the one or more additional needle guide channels are circumferentially positioned around
- 7 the body.
- 8 11. The medical device of claim 10, wherein the first needle guide channel and each
- 9 of the one or more additional needle guide channels are equidistant from each other.
- 10 12. A medical device configured to facilitate the placement of one or more needles in
- 11 a living patient, the medical device comprising:
- 12 a body;
- a lumen extending from a first lumen opening formed in the body to a second
- lumen opening formed in the body, the lumen adapted to receive a length
- of suture; and
- a first needle guide channel extending from a first needle guide channel opening
- formed in the body to a second needle guide channel opening formed in
- the body, the first needle guide channel having an arcuate shape.
- 19 13. The medical device of claim 12, further comprising a handle coupled to the body.
- 20 14. The medical device of claim 13, wherein the handle is coupled to the body by a
- 21 connector piece.
- 22 15. The medical device of claim 14, wherein the connector piece is bendable such that
- 23 it can be fixed in a variety of positions.
- 24 16. The medical device of claim 12, wherein a portion of the body is tapered.
- 25 17. The medical device of claim 12, further comprising:
- one or more additional needle guide channels, each extending from its own first
- 27 needle guide channel opening formed in the body to its own second needle
- guide channel opening formed in the body, each of the one or more
- 29 additional needle guide channels having an arcuate shape.

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- 2 of the one or more additional needle guide channels are circumferentially positioned
- 3 around the body.
- 4 19. The medical device of claim 18, wherein the first needle guide channel and each
- 5 of the one or more additional needle guide channels are equidistant from each other.
- 6 20. A medical device comprising:
- 7 a body;
- a lumen extending from a first lumen opening formed in the body to a second
- 9 lumen opening formed in the body, the lumen adapted to receive a length
- of suture;
- a first needle guide channel extending from a first needle guide channel opening
- formed in the body to a second needle guide channel opening formed in
- the body;
- a first needle adapted to be at least partially contained in the first needle guide
- channel; and
- a length of suture attachable to the first needle;
- wherein the lumen and first needle guide channel are configured in operative
- relation with each other such that when the needle is backloaded into the
- first needle guide channel, the needle will be advanced out of the first
- 20 needle guide channel by pulling on the length of suture after attaching the
- length of suture to the needle and threaded through the lumen.
- 22 21. The medical device of claim 20, wherein the first needle guide channel is arcuate
- 23 shaped.
- 24 22. The medical device of claim 20, further comprising a handle coupled to the body.
- 25 23. The medical device of claim 22, wherein the handle is coupled to the body by a
- 26 connector piece.
- 27 24. The medical device of claim 23, wherein the connector piece is bendable such that
- it can be fixed in a variety of positions.
- 29 25. The medical device of claim 20, wherein a portion of the body is tapered.
- 30 26. The medical device of claim 20, further comprising:

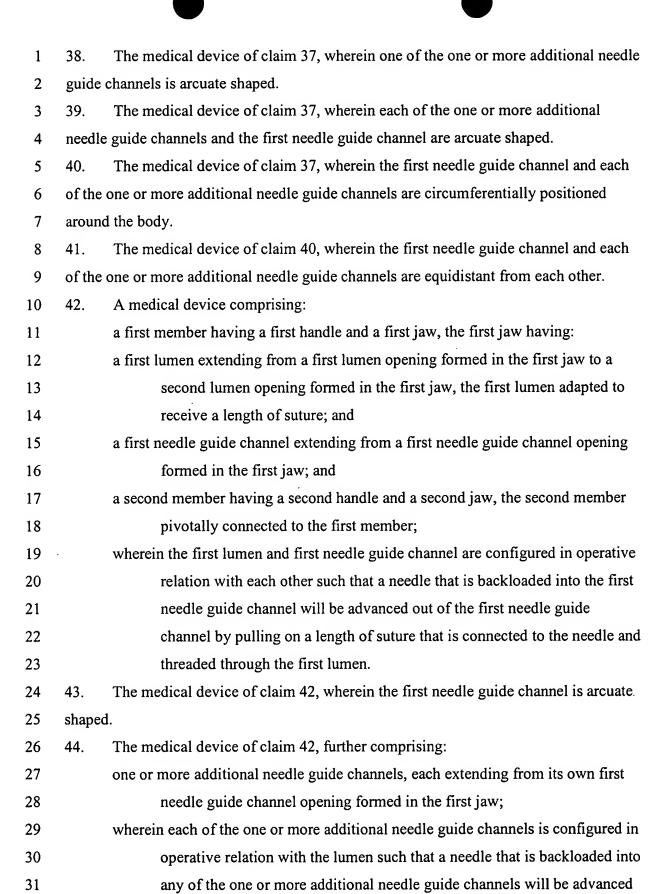
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1	one or more additional needle guide channels, each extending from its own first
2	needle guide channel opening formed in the body to its own second needle
3	guide channel opening formed in the body, each of the one or more
4	additional needle guide channels having its own additional needle adapted
5	to be at least partially contained in the additional needle guide channel;
6	one or more additional needles adapted to be at least partially contained in a
7	corresponding additional needle guide channel; and
8	one or more additional lengths of suture attachable to a corresponding additional
9	needle;
10	wherein each of the one or more additional needle guide channels is configured in
11	operative relation with the lumen such that when the additional needle
12	corresponding to the additional needle guide channel is backloaded into
13	the additional needle guide channel, the additional needle will be
14	advanced out of the additional needle guide channel by pulling on the
15	additional length of suture after the additional length of suture is
16	connected to the additional needle and threaded through the lumen.
17	27. The medical device of claim 26, wherein one of the one or more additional needle
18	guide channels is arcuate shaped.
19	28. The medical device of claim 26, wherein each of the one or more additional
20	needle guide channels and the first needle guide channel are arcuate shaped.
21	29. The medical device of claim 26, wherein the first needle guide channel and each
22	of the one or more additional needle guide channels are circumferentially positioned
23	around the body.
24	30. The medical device of claim 29, wherein the first needle guide channel and each
25	of the one or more additional needle guide channels are equidistant from each other.
26	31. A medical device comprising:
27	a body;
28	a lumen extending from a first lumen opening formed in the body to a second
29	lumen opening formed in the body, the lumen adapted to receive a length
30	of suture; and

1		a first needle guide channel extending from a first needle guide channel opening
2		formed in the body;
3		wherein the lumen and first needle guide channel are configured in operative
4		relation with each other such that when a length of suture is threaded
5		through the lumen and is connected to a needle that is backloaded into the
6		first needle guide channel, and the length of suture is pulled in a first
7		direction, the needle is advanced out of the needle guide channel in a
8		second direction,
9		wherein the first direction has a positive longitudinal component and the second
10		direction has a negative longitudinal component.
11	32.	The medical device of claim 31, wherein the first needle guide channel is arcuate
12	shape	ed.
13	33.	The medical device of claim 31, further comprising a handle coupled to the body.
14	34.	The medical device of claim 33, wherein the handle is coupled to the body by a
15	conn	ector piece.
16	35.	The medical device of claim 34, wherein the connector piece is bendable such that
17	it can be fixed in a variety of positions.	
18	36.	The medical device of claim 31, wherein a portion of the body is tapered.
19	37.	The medical device of claim 31, further comprising:
20		one or more additional needle guide channels, each extending from its own first
21		needle guide channel opening formed in the body;
22		wherein the lumen and each of the one of more additional needle guide channels
23		are configured in operative relation with each other such that when a
24		length of suture is threaded through the lumen and is connected to a needle
25		that is backloaded into one of the one or more additional needle guide
26		channels, and the length of suture is pulled in a first additional direction,
27		the needle is advanced out of the additional needle guide channel in a
28		second additional direction,
29		wherein the first additional direction has a positive longitudinal component and
30		the second additional direction has a negative longitudinal component.

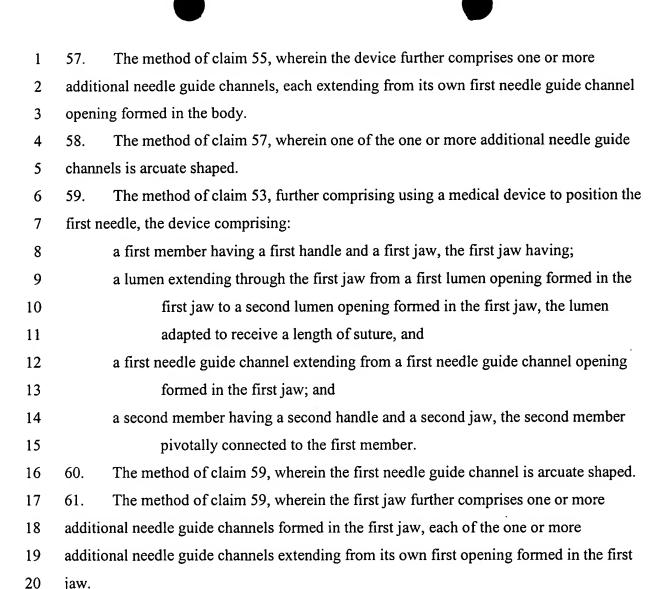
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1		out of the additional needle guide channel by pulling on a length of suture
2		that is connected to the needle and threaded through the lumen.
3	45.	The medical device of claim 44, wherein one of the one or more additional needle
4	guide	channels is arcuate shaped.
5	46.	The medical device of claim 44, wherein each of the one or more additional
6	needl	e guide channels and the first needle guide channel are arcuate shaped.
7	47.	The medical device of claim 42, wherein the second jaw comprises:
8		a second lumen extending from a third lumen opening formed in the second jaw
9		to a fourth lumen opening formed in the second jaw, the second lumen
10		adapted to receive a length of suture; and
11		a second needle guide channel extending from a second needle guide channel
12		opening formed in the second jaw;
13		wherein the second lumen and second needle guide channel are configured in
14		operative relation with each other such that a needle that is backloaded
15		into the second needle guide channel will be advanced out of the second
16		needle guide channel by pulling on a length of suture that is connected to
17		the needle and threaded through the second lumen.
18	48.	The medical device of claim 47, wherein the second needle guide channel is
19	arcua	te shaped.
20	49.	The medical device of claim 48, wherein the first and second needle guide
21	chann	nels cross each other.
22	50.	The medical device of claim 47, further comprising:
23		one or more additional needle guide channels, each extending from its own
24		second needle guide channel opening formed in the second jaw;
25		wherein each one or more additional needle guide channel is configured in
26		operative relation with the second lumen such that a needle that is
27		backloaded into any of the one or more additional needle guide channels
28		will be advanced out of the additional needle guide channel by pulling on
29		a length of suture that is connected to the needle and threaded through the
30		second lumen.

1	51.	The medical device of claim 50, wherein one of the one or more additional needle
2	guide	channels is arcuate shaped.
3	52.	The medical device of claim 50, wherein each of the one or more additional
4	needl	e guide channels and the first needle guide channel are arcuate shaped.
5	53.	A needle placement method comprising:
6		attaching a first length of suture to a first needle;
7		positioning the first needle; and
8		advancing the first length of suture in a first direction, thereby causing the needle
9		to move in a second direction, the first direction having a positive
10		longitudinal component and the second direction having a negative
11		longitudinal component.
12	54.	The method of claim 53, further comprising:
13		attaching one or more additional lengths of suture to one or more additional
14		needles;
15		positioning the one or more additional needles; and
16		advancing one or more of the one or more additional length of sutures in a first
17		additional direction, thereby causing the one or more additional needles
18		attached to the advancing one or more additional lengths of sutures to
19	•	move in a second additional direction, the first direction having a positive
20		longitudinal component and the second additional direction having a
21		negative longitudinal component.
22	55.	The method of claim 53, further comprising using a medical device to position the
23	first n	eedle, the device comprising:
24		a body having a first end and a second end;
25		a lumen extending from a first lumen opening formed in the body to a second
26		lumen opening formed in the body, the lumen adapted to receive a length
27		of suture; and
28		a first needle guide channel formed within the body, the first needle guide channel
29		extending from a first needle guide channel opening formed in the body.
30	56.	The method of claim 55, wherein the first needle guide channel is arcuate shaped.



- 21 62. The method of claim 61, wherein one of the one or more additional needle guide
- channels is arcuate shaped.
- 23 63. The method of claim 61, wherein each of the one or more additional needle guide
- channels and the first needle guide channel are arcuate shaped.